



Fibre

Fibre or roughage as it is also known, is essentially a carbohydrate and is found solely in plants. It is found in the walls of the plant cells and is the only part of the plant that cannot be digested by the human body.

What is the function of fibre?

The main function of fibre is to keep the digestive system healthy and functioning properly. Fibre aids and speeds up the excretion of waste and toxins from the body, preventing them from sitting in the intestine or bowel for too long which could cause build up and lead to several diseases.

Insoluble fibre

Fibre passes through the body virtually unchanged along with other digested food until it changes in the large intestine. Insoluble fibre promotes the growth of a certain friendly bacteria that ferment and makes the waste material soft and bulky, which in turn helps it to pass through the intestine quicker to the bowel and out of the body.

Insoluble fibre prevents constipation by adding bulk and liquid to aid movement, and promote regular bowel movements.

Sources of insoluble fibre

Can be found in foods such as bran, wholemeal flour and breads, brown rice, wholegrain cereals, vegetables, edible peels of fruits, nuts and seeds.

Soluble fibre

Soluble fibre absorbs water in the intestine, which softens the stool and helps the waste material move through the body more quickly.

Soluble fibre slows down digestion and the sudden increase of energy especially from carbohydrates into the bloodstream, which means that blood sugar levels are more stable and energy or glucose is released slowly — steadily, preventing sudden feelings of tiredness, lack of energy or hunger pangs.

Soluble fibre rich foods

Eating a diet that does not contain enough fibre can lead to bowel irregularities and stomach discomfort. Foods that do not contain any, or very little fibre, include refined cereals and white bread, meat and animal products, dairy produce and fast foods.

Required fibre intake

An adequate intake of fibre is about 18g a day, however up to 30-35g is recommended.

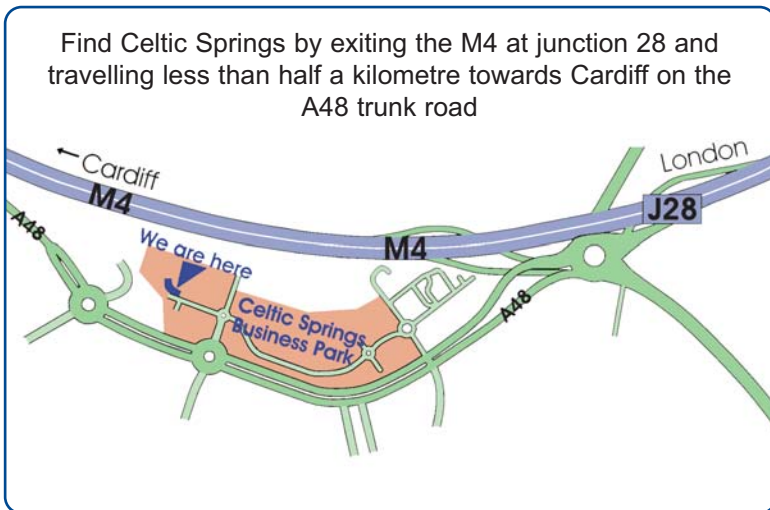
If you are going to increase the amount of fibre in your diet you should also drink larger volumes of water to compensate for water that is absorbed by the fibre, otherwise this could lead to constipation.

How to introduce more Fibre in the diet

- Start the day with porridge, high fibre cereals and wholemeal bread
- Eat more portions of fruit and skinned fruit
- Eat potatoes with skins on
- Include chickpeas and lentils to salads, stews, curries.
- Try to eat more raw fruit and vegetables
- Add seeds and nuts to salads, or eat as a snack
- Switch to brown rice, brown bread and wholemeal pasta
- Buy foods containing whole grains
- Add barley to homemade soups
- Remember to increase water intake

This fact sheet was designed to help you. Please do not hesitate to ask any questions of our specialists and nurses.

If you have any problems following your procedure call Nucleus Healthcare during opening hours
08:00 hrs. — 18:00 hrs.



Nucleus Healthcare
Spoooner Close,
Celtic Springs Business Park,
Newport, NP10 8FZ

Tel: 01633 815900
Fax: 01633 815915